

County Council Meeting – 8 May 2012

Statement by Members

Formed in 1965 to provide recreational facilities, safeguard the countryside to the west of London from urbanisation, and to conserve the landscape, the Colne Valley Regional Park Partnership celebrated its 40th year in 2005, the year I was elected, and appointed to the partnership.

The park covers over 40 square miles, stretching from Rickmansworth in the north to Staines in the south, and is a mosaic of farmland, woodland and water, with 200 miles of river and canal and over 60 lakes. It is also a living environment providing employment and homes for many people, as well as being a haven for wildlife.

Stanwell Moor, Staines Moors SSSI, the Staines reservoirs, and Church Llamas are all in the Colne Valley Regional Park.

Surrey County Council was a founding member, but sadly decided to withdraw funding from this partnership, a relatively small sum of just over £3,000 per year, which Groundwork Thames Valley, the managing charity, have constantly delivered a ten fold increase on.

The consequence was that on Friday I attended the historic last meeting of the partnership, however, this was not the end for the Colne Valley Regional Park, but a new beginning, with the formation of the Colne Valley Park Community Interest Company (CIC).

This is now an exciting time for the park, and I hope that Surrey County Council will continue to play an important part in protecting this countryside in the north of Surrey, this countryside on our doorstep in Spelthorne, and accept the place that has been offered to it on the new board of the CIC.

Carol Coleman
Local Member for Ashford
8 May 2012